



## EVENTS

### Nov 20 & Dec 4th

#### Toe-Up Socks, 10 am - 12 pm

No more single sock syndrome after taking this class with Margaret Sturgill. \$45 + supplies.

### November 26 & 27

#### Holiday Sale 10 am - 5 pm

The entire store will be 25% off after Thanksgiving. If you bring in a new or handmade child's toy you can get 35% off!

### December 7 & 14

#### Beaded Wrist Warmers, 5 pm - 7 pm

Examine different types of beaded Lithuanian wrist warmers and make your own with Donna Druchunas. \$30 + supplies.

### December 11

#### Cast-On and Bind-Off Techniques, 9:30 am - 4 pm

Learn at least seven different cast-ons along with six different bind-offs and when to use them. \$65 + supplies.

### Wednesdays

#### Drop-in Knit & Crochet Help 10 am - 2 pm

Master knitter, Kathy Hartmeister is here to help with ongoing projects or help you choose a new one. \$10 drop-in fee.

Download the Full Schedule at <http://www.mysisterknits.com/files/MSKFallSchedule10.pdf>

The holiday season is the season of giving and this year for many our generosity is more important than ever. Here at My Sister Knits we want to help make the holidays a wonderful time for everyone so we have many different ways in which you can help us help our community. As always, thank you so much for continuing to support local charities.

On Friday and Saturday, November 26 & 27 we are marking the entire store at 25% off. But, you can save even more - if you donate a new or handmade children's gift we'll take 35% off! We are also an official drop-off location for holiday decorations for those displaced by the Boulder wildfire this fall. All ornaments, stockings and garland should be new or in great condition. This neighborly act of giving could make a family's holiday this year. Once again we continue to deliver cold weather wear to The Mission each Tuesday.

If you are a sewer too, Poudre Valley Hospital Oncology ward is accepting 100% cotton handmade pillowcases to

brighten the rooms and go home with the patients. One of my favorites is the free Hot Dog pattern. It is a fun project to combine fabrics. Janet from Tuesday night knitting will be delivering them.

If you cannot donate in any of the above ways, you can shop for the holidays and help others by attending the Harmony House Christmas Fair, December 4th, 9am - 4pm. This fair features handmade goods by some talented local artisans and crafts people. Harmony House is a place for children in the court system to feel safe when visiting with family members as is an important service to our community.

Coming soon to the shop, keep your eyes peeled for Malabrigo yarn and a new look in Debbie Bliss yarns!

I think you will agree one of the greatest gifts we have is the gift of giving. Keep knitting, enjoy the crisp air and remember how lucky we are this holiday season.

Happy Holidays,

*Julie*

## HOLIDAY PATTERNS



Some of our favorite seasonal patterns any time of the year are the wonderfully detailed and whimsical felted patterns by designer, Marie Mayhew. We have a wide variety of Marie's winter and holiday patterns in stock, even more than those pictured at left. Stop in and pick out one or three to make today!

# What Is Superwash?



If you have ever set out to crochet or knit a gift for a baby or child, or even for a non-yarnie you have likely considered, if not chosen, a superwash yarn. Many of us have no idea what makes a yarn superwash. To fully understand superwash yarns we will need to know a bit about wool and its structure as well as the processes the wool goes through to become washable with minimal shrinkage and felting.

## Wool Structure

If you were to look at one strand of wool up close under a microscope you would see that it is not smooth. Not only does wool often contain some crimp and curl, but the surface is irregular and contains what is called scales. If you can cast your mind to some of the stereotypical shampoo and conditioner television commercials that claim to repair damaged hair their depictions of damaged hair are similar to what most wool looks like under the microscope. It is these scales that allow us to make all those fun felted projects. The scales are also to blame when a beloved handmade wool item shrinks to an unwearable size.

## The Felting Process

There are three conditions that can cause wool to felt - water, agitation and temperature change. The presence of any two of those is likely to result in felting and the presence of all three will nearly guarantee it. Water acts almost like lubrication allowing the individual strands of wool to slip and slide against each other when agitation or drastic temperature changes happen. The movement of the wool fibers causes the scales to interlock and start to form a solid piece of felt fabric. The temperature change acts much like agitation in that the expansion and contraction of the fibers when exposed to higher or lower temperatures respectively causes internal agitation that can also cause felting.



## ▲ Superwash Yarns

**Clockwise from upper left:** Cascade 220 Superwash, Sublime Extra Fine Merino DK, Spud & Chloe's Sweater, Lorna's Laces Shepherd Bulky, and Spud & Chloe's Outer.

## The Superwash Process

To prevent felting and shrinkage of wool fabric the solution is to deal with those scales that interlock. Early superwash wools were exposed to a carbonization process to remove the scales, but this proved to be hard on the wool, causing a harsh feel. The resulting yarns and garments also were prone to yellowing and brittleness as they aged.

Today's superwash wool is quite different. Most commercial wool on the market today goes through a two part process to become washable. The first step is chlorination which softens the scales and causes the wool to take up dye more readily. The wool is also lightened which can reduce differences amongst dye lots. The second step of the superwash process is the application of a polymer, often Hercosett-125, to smooth and seal the scales. To date, this process is the most effective with the least change in the hand of the wool.

If any difference is noted in the feel of superwash wool as compared to standard wool, superwash is often described as slightly "squeaky." Some may find it a bit slicker on the needles or hook and handspinners making their own yarn from superwash roving will usually require a greater twist per inch to hold the fibers together. As mentioned above, hand dyers will likely notice a faster uptake of the dye and often greater saturation of color for a given ratio of fiber to dye.

Other methods of treating wool to prevent shrinkage are currently being conducted, most notably various enzymatic treatments. The advantage of these methods are the more natural process and lower impact on the environment. However, the enzymes are often not available in the quantities needed for commercial application. At the present time the enzymatic treatments are not as effective as the current convention and not used in most, if any, commercial yarns on the market.

## Caring for Superwash Items

Examining the yarn labels of a variety of superwash wool yarns may confuse you. Some will note that machine washing and drying is allowed while others may recommend hand washing and air drying. It is always best practice to follow the recommendations of the manufacturer or err on the side of caution. I almost always hand wash items made from superwash yarns as I find it extends the period of optimum appearance in my finished garments and accessories. Early on in my knitting career I discovered machine drying, even on air-fluff with no heat, produced a noticeable fuzzing of the yarn which later promoted the formation of pills so I always air dry hand knits. Air drying provides the opportunity to block items to keep hems straight and if needed match specific garment dimensions.

# Later, Gator!

BY AMANDA BERKA | PHOTO BY KRISTI SCHUELER



## Yarn

Sublime Extra Fine Merino Wool DK, 100% merino wool; 127 yds / 116 m per 50 g; 1 skein. Shown in color 0224 Sesame.

## Needles & Notions

- US 6 / 4.0 mm needles 16" / 40.5 cm long, or size needed to obtain gauge
- 1 Stitch marker
- Tapestry needle
- Clover Pom-Pom Maker (optional)

## Gauge & Size

Shown at 21 sts per 4" / 10 cm in pattern knit in the round.

17" / 43 cm in circumference and 6¼" / 16 cm tall.

## Special Instructions

Abbreviations used follow the standards at <http://www.craftyarnCouncil.com/knit.html>.

**Optional:** With leftover yarn, create two pom-poms and attach as desired. By using safety pins they are easily removed for laundering.

## Edging

Loosely CO 90 sts, join to work in the round being careful not to twist stitches. Place marker at start of round.

**Rnd 1:** Purl.

**Rnd 2:** Knit.

**Rnd 3:** Purl.

## Body

**Rnd 4:** \*K7, k2tog, yo; rep from \* to end of rnd.

**Rnd 5:** Knit.

**Rnd 6:** K6, k2tog, yo, \*k7, k2tog, yo; rep from \* to end of rnd, ending with k1.

**Rnd 7:** Knit.

**Rnd 8:** K5, k2tog, yo, \*k7, k2tog, yo; rep from \* to end of rnd, ending with k2.

**Rnd 9:** Knit.

**Rnd 10:** K4, k2tog, yo, \*k7, k2tog, yo; rep from \* to end of rnd, ending with k3.

**Rnd 11:** Knit.

**Rnd 12:** K3, k2tog, yo, \*k7, k2tog, yo; rep from \* to end of rnd, ending with k4.

**Rnd 13:** Knit.

**Rnd 14:** K2, k2tog, yo, \*k7, k2tog, yo; rep from \* to end of rnd, ending with k5.

**Rnd 15:** Knit.

**Rnd 16:** K1, k2tog, yo, \*k7, k2tog, yo; rep from \* to end of rnd, ending with k6.

**Rnd 17:** Knit.

**Rnd 18:** K2tog, yo, \*k7, k2tog, yo; rep from \* to end of rnd, ending with k7.

**Rnd 19:** Knit to 1 st before mrkr.

**Rnd 20:** Remove start of rnd marker, knit last st of Rnd 19 with first st of Rnd 20, pm, yo, \*k7, k2tog, yo; rep from \* to end of rnd, ending with k8.

**Rnd 21:** Knit.

Repeat Rnds 4-21 until piece measures 6" / 15 cm.

## Edging

Work Rnds 1-3.

BO all sts loosely.

## Finishing

Weave in ends and block as desired.

# Kristi Geraci



Have you knit the Fruit Loop socks, Cachoeira socks or Ailbe mittens from Knitty? If you have or you are a follower of sock designer Cookie A's blog you may already know our featured designer, Kristi Geraci. Currently of

Boulder, Kristi is a native of Minnesota where she taught herself to knit from an old book of her mom's after her co-blogger, Cookie A, taught her to crochet and introduced her to the joys of yarn shopping.

Like many, Kristi's first project was a striped acrylic scarf that was knit of stockinette stitch, rolled like crazy, had twisted stitches and was frequently worn with pride anyway. Handspun knee-high stockings and a doily

made from tiny crochet cotton top her list of projects she is proud to have completed. Today her favorite projects to knit are resoundingly socks.

Kristi confesses to designing knit projects because she found it easier to come up with her own things once she understood the basic construction of a garment type rather than following a pattern. Her first design was a double-knit hat because she was not yet comfortable with double pointed needles. Stitch dictionaries are a great source of inspiration for Kristi's designs. She enjoys picturing different stitch patterns on different garments or even envisioning a way to alter them slightly. "When a pattern gets stuck in my head and I can't get it out, even to sleep, I know I have another design I must knit."

Her knitting philosophy is simple, "Be the boss of your knitting." She enjoys teaching other people how to fix their mistakes and alter designs to suit them. It empowers them to be in better control of their projects and enjoy the process rather than be stressed by it.



#### Kristi Geraci on Ravelry:

<http://www.ravelry.com/designers/kristi-geraci>

#### Kristi Geraci's Pattern Store:

<http://www.ravelry.com/stores/kristi-geraci-designs>

#### Kristi Geraci on Twitter:

<http://www.twitter.com/freezercake>

#### Knitters Anonymous Blog:

*Note there are currently technical issues and posts may not be available.*

<http://www.knitanon.com/blog>

## Free Toy Patterns

- Susan B. Anderson's Elefante - <http://bit.ly/9OUFFT>
- Kat Lewinski's Grumpasaurus - <http://bit.ly/cQWME5>
- Marleen Hartog's Braided Ball - <http://bit.ly/buRfOZ>
- Tonya Gunn's Gnome Baby - <http://bit.ly/au8s6K>
- Bobbi Pdgett's Sock Giraffe - <http://bit.ly/979seK>
- Melissa Burt's Grumpy, the Lump of Coal - <http://bit.ly/bRNH1Z>
- ChimuChimu's Crochet Monkey - <http://bit.ly/dduEWX>
- Berroco's Celestine Crochet - <http://bit.ly/bJGATi> and Knit Sock - <http://bit.ly/beYMK1> and original Knit Sport - <http://bit.ly/9ae2JW>

## November Sale

25% Off  
Entire Store

November 26 & 27  
Only!